

Commonly Used Planning Terms:

Active Recreation Space – Space that is primarily designed for a particular recreational activity (e.g. community center, ball fields, swimming pool).

Affordable Housing – Housing that can be purchased or rented by a majority of persons within a particular jurisdiction (city, county, state, etc.) and is considered safe and reasonable to maintain.

Annexation – The addition of an area directly adjacent (or in close proximity) to the City's jurisdiction in order to collect additional revenues and regulate development and building activity in exchange for City services, such as water and sewer.

Annexation, Voluntary – When one or more property owners request annexation into the city, typically to receive water and sewer service.

Annexation, Involuntary – When the City (and not the property owners) initiates annexation for areas similar in characteristics to areas already within the city limits.

Annexation Agreement – An agreement between nearby cities that establishes future boundaries for each jurisdiction based on their predicted ability to provide public services to designated areas.

Buffer (Planting Yard) – An area of land, frequently landscaped, that separates different land uses.

Built-Up Area – The portion of a site covered by buildings, pavement, recreation facilities or other surfaces that prevents water from draining into the soil.

Capital Improvement Program (CIP) – A prioritized list of large city facilities needed within the next three to five years, including an estimate of anticipated costs and potential funding sources. The CIP is used to identify projects that can either be incorporated into the City's annual capital budget or, if bond funding is needed, presented to the voters for approval.

Cluster Development – Development that creates smaller lots than normally allowed in the zoning district in order to preserve open spaces or to address specific environmental issues (e.g. flood plains, steep slopes) that greatly limit development options for the site.

Collector Street – A street designed primarily to move traffic between low volume roads that provide direct access to individual properties and higher volume roadways that link large portions of the city together.

Community Facility – A fixed asset that includes any acquisition of land or construction, expansion or replacement of an existing facility designed to serve future growth and redevelopment. A community facility must have an initial cost of at least \$100,000 and a life expectancy of at least 15 years.

Community Facilities Plan – A fifteen-year plan to identify the city’s community facilities needs and to establish priorities that will be used to develop the shorter range Capital Improvement Program and annual city budget.

Comprehensive Plan – A plan that outlines the long-range goals and objectives for future growth and development for the city. A comprehensive plan includes a land use plan, a community facilities plan and a transportation plan, and can include other elements such as housing, recreation and open space, and downtown development.

Conditional Use Zoning District – A companion zoning district that establishes certain uses or additional standards beyond those of a general zoning district. All requirements of the general zoning district remain in effect, except where the conditional use district requires higher standards.

Conditional Use Permit (CUP) – A written agreement, approved as part of a conditional use zoning district, that allows or prohibits certain land uses and sets specific development conditions in addition to those required by a property’s existing or proposed zoning designation. A CUP may only be approved by the City Council if it finds that the conditions in the CUP meet requirements regarding health and public safety, do not substantially injure the value of adjacent property, and are in harmony with surrounding properties and the Development Ordinance.

Condominium – A form of property ownership in which separate sections of a building have individual owners, but all the separate owners own the underlying property and common spaces collectively. Condominiums may be residential, office, retail or industrial. Condominiums are not considered a distinct land use or a subdivision for purposes of meeting the City’s development standards.

Connectivity – The ability of a development’s components, such as streets, open spaces, sidewalks, greenways and public utilities to efficiently connect, which minimizes maintenance costs.

Corridor/Area Plan – A plan that examines an area identified by common characteristics, such as proximity to a major road, an area facing significant development pressures, or an area impacted by similar environmental issues that makes recommendations regarding land use, transportation, community facilities and overall appearance. Corridor/Area Plans are considered part of the City’s Land Use Plan.

Density – Refers to the concentration of residential units within a specified geographic area, usually described by the number of units per acre. The higher the density, the more residential units are located within the same space.

Developmental Focal Area – An area where, due to anticipated development pressures, flexibility is needed in determining the appropriate future land use designation(s), rather than adhering to a previously established land use pattern.

Development Ordinance – A document that incorporates all the City’s zoning, subdivision and environmental rules and regulations related to the development of land within its jurisdiction.

Easement – A grant of access, maintenance or development rights by a property owner to the public, a corporation, or other entity for one or more public purposes (e.g. utility easement, drainage easement, greenway easement).

Engineered Stormwater Control – A device or method, such as a stormwater drainage pond, that is used to effectively collect and disperse stormwater and limit or eliminate potential negative effects, such as flooding or a reduction in water quality. The type and size of such devices varies depending on the area the water is received from, the amount of impervious surface in the area, and the characteristics of the surrounding terrain.

Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) – Areas directly adjacent to the City’s corporate limits where it may enforce its zoning and subdivision regulations and building codes. No additional codes or taxes may be imposed in the ETJ, and people living within the ETJ must have representation on the City’s Planning and Zoning Commission and Board of Adjustment. The City exercises its ETJ powers over areas where it intends to eventually extend public services and in order to ensure orderly growth using one set of development regulations.

Floating District (i.e. PUD, TND) – A zoning district that has no set location on the approved zoning map, but may be applied to a particular area via the rezoning process to promote types of development not possible using conventional zoning district standards.

Flood Plain – The relatively flat area or low land adjacent to the channel of a river, stream, lake, or other body of water that has been or may be covered by floodwater. Development may be allowed in a flood plain under certain conditions.

Floodway – The channel of a river, stream, lake, or other body of water and the adjacent land areas that must be preserved in order to allow the flow of water so the height of the water’s surface is not increased by more than one (1) foot. Development is not allowed in a floodway.

Future Growth Area – An area where urban development is not anticipated at the time the Land Use Plan is adopted. This designation means the City does not intend to provide public services to these areas until the plan is appropriately amended by the City Council.

General Use District – Any conventional zoning district (e.g., residential, office or commercial) that establishes minimum development standards and allowable land uses.

Greenway – Any publicly owned and maintained open space, walkway or trail that is designed for use as a means of transportation for pedestrians and bicycles and for general recreational purposes.

Human Scale – An element of design that focuses on the pedestrian at the street level and the interaction of people. Human scale encourages the use of design features such as low-rise buildings, minimal building setbacks from the street, storefronts facing the street and buildings that incorporate display windows, awnings, arcades and porches.

Infill Development – Development on vacant or underutilized lots (e.g. smaller buildings on large lots) within previously developed areas. Infill development is encouraged because it can more easily use existing infrastructure and services than development at the city’s periphery.

Integrated Mixed-Use Development (IMUD) – A development containing two (2) or more stores, service establishments, offices or other permitted uses designed to function as a unified whole and featuring common driveways, parking signage and landscaping (e.g. shopping center, business park, etc.).

Land Use Classification – A designation in the City’s Land Use Plan that establishes the type(s) of development anticipated for a particular area, based on existing site characteristics and recent or anticipated development.

Land Use Plan – A plan that outlines goals, objectives and policies for future land development (or redevelopment) within the City’s planning area. The plan also includes background information about the community and a land use map.

Land Use Plan Map – A map that graphically depicts the land use classifications for land within the City’s planning area based on the Land Use Plan’s goals, objectives, and policies.

Leapfrog Development – Development that occurs in areas not directly adjacent to the city’s existing corporate limits. Leapfrog development creates inefficiencies in the provision of public services, such as police and fire protection and garbage service, because service providers must travel farther to provide services to the new development.

Local Street – A street whose primary function is to provide access to individual properties.

Manufactured Dwelling – A structure, transportable in one or more sections built on a permanent chassis and designed for use with or without a permanent foundation that can be connected to the required utilities.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) – A regional organization that includes a large city or county and nearby smaller jurisdictions, which examines regional transportation needs and determines priorities for transportation funding. High Point’s MPO includes High Point, Jamestown, Guilford County, Davidson County, Thomasville, Archdale, Trinity and Randolph County.

Mixed-Use Development – Development that includes several different types of land uses in close proximity, such as residential and commercial uses, or higher density and lower density uses. Mixed-use development may include uses that are side-by-side or in the same structure.

Multi-family Dwelling – A building used as a residence for three (3) or more families living independently of each other with separate housekeeping and cooking facilities for each family. Multi-family dwellings include apartments, townhouses and condominiums.

Multi-modal Development – Development that incorporates the use of a variety of transportation options (e.g. walking, public transportation, private cars) in its design.

Nonconforming – A lot, structure, sign, or use of land that is prohibited under current zoning regulations, but was lawful when the zoning regulations were established, or became lawful at some later date.

Open Space – A privately or publicly owned area set aside for the common use and enjoyment of the owners or the general public.

Overlay Zoning District – A zoning district that applies additional development regulations than those required by the underlying conventional zoning district.

Passive Recreational Space – Open space that accommodates a variety of recreational activities but is not designed for any particular use (e.g. common areas, public parks, plazas).

Pedestrian Oriented Development – Development that incorporates a mixture of land uses in a compact design to facilitate people walking to accomplish their daily activities.

Planning Area – The area covered by the City’s Land Use Plan, which includes the City’s future boundaries as established by annexation agreements with its neighboring communities (i.e. Greensboro, Jamestown, Archdale, Thomasville, Davidson County and Kernersville).

Planning Goals and Objectives – Planning goals establish desired results, while planning objectives identify specific steps needed to achieve these goals. *Ex. A planning goal promoting development with limited environmental impact can include objectives for tree preservation, preserving areas of undeveloped land (open space) or limiting the amount of land that may be disturbed during development.*

Planning Policy – A fundamental principle or standard procedure guiding land development. *Ex. A land use classification indicates the types of development anticipated for that designated area.*

Planning Regulation – A development requirement backed by the authority of law.

Planned Unit Development (PUD) – An area of land under unified ownership or control to be developed and improved as a single entity under a Master Plan. A PUD incorporates a mixture of land uses and is not practical or feasible under conventional zoning regulations.

Right-of-Way – A portion of property, usually conveyed to the City, where the City or other public and private utilities have the right to enter to develop and maintain public infrastructure or address issues of public health and safety.

Scenic Corridor Overlay District – An area, usually along a significant transportation corridor, where specific architectural and development standards are implemented in order to improve its appearance and functionality.

Setback – The distance from a specified boundary (property line, street right-of-way line, or street centerline) to the closest part of a building, structure, or sign.

Single Family Attached Dwelling – Two or more residential buildings attached to one another in which each unit occupies its own lot. Single family attached dwellings include townhouses and twin home dwellings.

Single Family Detached Dwelling – A separate, detached building designed for and occupied exclusively by one (1) family.

Special Use Permit (SUP) – A permit that allows a particular land use that would not otherwise be allowed by existing zoning standards. A SUP may only be approved by the City Council if it finds that the conditions in the SUP meet requirements regarding health and public safety, meet all applicable development standards, do not substantially injure the value of adjacent properties, and are in harmony with surrounding properties and the Land Use Plan.

Strip Development – Development that includes multiple commercial or retail tenants located within a single building, usually located along major thoroughfares due to their dependence on high traffic volumes.

Subdivision – The division of a tract or parcel of land into two (2) or more lots, building sites, or other divisions for the purpose of sale or development (whether immediately or in the future).

Substandard Housing – Housing that is determined by the City to be unfit for human habitation due to immediate health and/or safety issues.

Thoroughfare Street – A street designed to collect and move large volumes of traffic within and through urban areas. These streets are generally used to move traffic across town.

Traditional Neighborhood District (TND) – Development under unified ownership or control that is compact, incorporates a mixture of land uses and is pedestrian oriented. TND's are based on neighborhoods as they were designed prior to World War II.

Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) – A study conducted by a licensed professional engineer to evaluate transportation impacts from a proposed development and to identify ways to limit any negative impacts.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) – A Transportation Plan prepared by the City and approved by the State that prioritizes transportation projects and includes estimated timelines and costs for completion.

Transportation Plan – A plan that examines the city's existing and future transportation needs based on anticipated land use patterns and provides recommended goals and objectives to address those needs. The transportation plan is one component of the Comprehensive Plan.

Tree Preservation – The effort to maintain the health and long-term survival of a tree or group of trees during and after the development of land.

Watershed – The entire area of land that provides drainage to a body of water.

Water Supply Watershed – The entire area of land that provides drainage to bodies of water used as public water supplies.

Zoning District – An area of land, as shown on the City's Zoning Map, where the specific requirements for the development and uses of land defined in the Development Ordinance apply.

Zoning Map – The official map that applies zoning districts to all land within the city's corporate limits and ETJ.